



STAR TREK THE ANIMATED SERIES

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Introduction



Thick shadows hung between the arches of one of the corridors beneath the Great Hall. A perfect place for clandestine meetings. Sa'kal stood at the far end, his eyes straining to look for hidden people—potential witnesses—hiding in the gloom. His own men—T'Kar and H'Ta—pressed against the walls behind him for that very purpose. As joH of the House of Sa'kal, he never traveled without his personal guard. He could trust these men to keep their mouths shut after his meeting.

Lord Hoghe rounded the corner at the far end of the corridor, accompanied by two of his own bodyguards. He looked lean, slightly hunched over like a Denebian vulture, eyes darting from side-to-side. Hoghe was more suspicious than usual, which is what had kept him alive all these years. He strode down the hall, stopping a few feet away.

"We have a mutual enemy. We should ally." Hoghe said bluntly.

It was the traditional opening to negotiations. Sa'kal smiled a toothy grin. So, this is what Hoghe wanted, to strike a deal. He said nothing in response.

"The House of Chang wants control over Mobeh sector," Hoghe continued. "That is controlled by the House of Voss. They are weak, but ally themselves with the House of Kang."

"You want the dilithium mines on Qantay, and an advance base for an eventual invasion of the Raknor sector." Sa'kal said. It was a blunt assessment, stated like a true Klingon. He wanted Hoghe to know that he understood the strategic implications. A fool's only achievement is death. This frankness seemed to offend Hoghe. Apparently he didn't like his plans thrown back in his face.

"We plan to attack the House of Voss, and take the planet Qantay from them. This will cause an uproar on the High Council, one led by the House of Kang." Hoghe paused. "We want you to support us on the High Council. Others listen to you. And to your three fleets."

The truth comes out, Sa'kal thought. He wants my fleets to provide defense and support for their action. The House of Chang proposed more than he'd anticipated. "What do you offer my House?" he asked.

"Everyone knows you plan to invade the Othan sector. Because this would lead to war with the Romulans, the High Council would not stand for the move. The House of Kang would lead the coalition against you, perhaps even attempt to seize your lands. My voice, raised in your favor, will tip the balance."

Sa'kal considered. He didn't like scheming in secret. It was un-Klingon. What would the rest of the Empire, the men and women who fought and died for honor, think if they knew their leaders dickered like Ferengi in the marketplace? The offer was tempting. He wanted to reclaim the Othan sector, as a matter of honor. The other Great Houses would object after the fact, leaving his fleets open to Romulan attack, and making him vulnerable. He could sway the Houses of Toghuss, Daa'maq, and Telok. Another ally on the High Council would help. But not enough.

"I will accept your offer—if you pledge two fleets of your own. Attacking Otha together will make them understand our Houses acted for the good of the Empire." It was a gamble on Sa'kal's part. He knew the Chang would fight poorly, leaving the brunt of the battle to his own ships. But it would send a powerful signal to the other Great Houses, and ensure Hoghe's support.

Now, it was Hoghe's turn to consider. It was clear on his face that he did not want to commit his House so firmly, perhaps even planned to renege when the time came to support Sa'kal in Council Chambers. Hoghe had no choice, however, if he wanted Sa'kal's

friendship. The pain of making the decision showed on Hoghe's face. "Agreed," he said.

The two Klingons parted, each backing away from the other warily. A few steps apart, Hoghe turned on the balls of his feet, his cloak billowing behind him, and he stalked down the hall.

Suddenly, he turned and shouted "You trade like a Ferengi," with a toothy grin.

Sa'kal's hand reflexively went to his d'k tahg at the insult. His two guards tensed in the shadows, ready to strike. But he needed Hoghe. He released his hand from the knife's hilt, let the insult go. For now...

The signing of the Khitomer Accords, and the slow but steady progress towards peace, has led to a greater understanding between the Klingon Empire and the United Federation of Planets. Once, we saw the Klingons as warlike, hostile, savage. It was easy to demonize them as "animals." But over time, and with increased contacts, we came to see their positive traits—loyalty, honor, cunning, and pride. Getting a firm grasp on their true character became the highest priority, in order to ensure peace. In order to find out more about the Klingons, and foster amity between our two governments, the Federation Council embarked on a program of cultural exchanges, and the Klingon High Council agreed.

Today, in the 24th century, we know more about the Klingons than at any other time. Scientific ventures have expanded our knowledge of Klingon language, physiology, and psychology. Cultural exchanges have brought Klingon opera, art exhibitions, and cuisine to the UFP. Travel to the Empire has allowed Federation citizens to observe the Klingon way of life. Various joint operations have taught us to work together—none moreso than the recently concluded Dominion War. The Federation has expanded its knowledge of Klingon history, culture, politics, economics, language and traditions. These contacts have done the same for the Klingons, with regard to Federation institutions and values. When you put a face to your enemy, it becomes harder to keep them as enemies.

This document is the result. It catalogs what we know about Klingons—their world-view, political structure, military operations, and their territory. Starfleet Command encourages all officers utilize it in conjunction with their missions near Klingon space. As extensive as this database is, it remains incomplete. A single document can no more summarize the Klingons than it can Humanity. While the authors strove to be as complete as possible, some gaps may exist. Where this information is incomplete, Starfleet Command recommends you adhere to the situation "on the ground." Don't let this database constrain your

activities. Above all, approach your contacts with the Klingons with a sense of humor and good will.

What is this Book

Welcome to the *Klingon Empire*! Inside this book, you will find all the color and complexity of Klingon society in one place. If you're a Narrator, you will find the material on Klingon culture, politics, Houses, and the like should help you develop rich, nuanced stories involving these complex characters. We have tried to collect Klingon references from the movies and episodes, and expand on them. While no longer enemies of the Federation, the Klingons can still play an important role in a *Star Trek* story, as you explore the meanings of virtue, duty, and honor. If you're a player, this book tells you a lot about Klingons—the burden of honor, the rights and privileges of House membership, and the powers of the High Council. Let it serve as your guide.

Yet *The Klingon Empire* comes into its own as a setting for a *Next Generation* or *Deep Space Nine* RPG series. Players can explore the Klingon perspective, where aggression, tradition, and honor hold sway. If you plan to play a Klingon character, you'll want to read this material to understand the Klingon psyche and the demands of Klingon society. Battle against rival Houses, for honor and power. Seek out new battlegrounds on alien worlds. Or struggle with what it means to be Klingon. So grab a *bat'leth* and prepare to enter the Klingon Empire. *Qapla'*!

Chapter One: The Klingons introduces Klingon society, discussing their physiology and psychology. Discover the finer points of Klingon mysticism, rituals, and honor.

A people are nothing without their history. **Chapter Two: The Lessons of History** discusses the history and legends of the Klingon people. Learn about the rise of the Klingon Empire, the life of Kahless, the alliance with the Romulans, and the Dominion War.

Klingon Houses form the social framework by which the Empire is organized. **Chapter Three: Masters of War and Destiny** discusses the central role played by *tuqpu'*—tribes—in Klingon society. Find out what it means to be a member of a Klingon House, what role they play, and how they join together on the High Council.

Battle is central to the Klingon psyche, and perhaps the most important endeavor a House pursues is war. **Chapter Four: The Empire's**

Hammer describes the organization of the Empire's fighting forces, and how Klingon fleets operate.

The ability to project power is central to the Klingon Empire.

Chapter Five: Warships introduces several new classes of battle-ship—from the mighty *Negh'Var* to stalwart *Kelirax*-class Heavy Scout. It also defines the ship types used by the Empire.

Klingons place a high value on warfare, and employ an astounding array of weapons, both primitive and sophisticated. **Chapter Six: Tools of the Trade** provides you with an arsenal of deadly new devices for your games.

Chapter Seven: Qo'noS describes the homeworld of the Klingons. Visit Khoras, Sakrej, or Vospeg, and learn about the harsh environment that spawned perhaps the most aggressive species in the galaxy. Venture onto the streets of *veng wa'Dlch*—the First City—but keep your *d'k tahg* handy.

The Klingon Empire includes many systems. **Chapter Eight: Worlds of the Empire** provides a look at Klingon space beyond the now-defunct Neutral Zone. Travel to Khitomer to see the signing place of the Khitomer Accords. Visit Beta Thoridar and track down supporters of the House of Duras. Or explore the far side of the Empire, and bring honor to your House.

Chapter Nine: Klingon Character Creation provides players and Narrators with the information needed to create Klingon warriors. Choose your House, become a warrior, and fight for honor.

Chapter Ten: Klingon Traits introduces a number of new skills and traits specific for Klingon characters. Choose to be the *bogh wa'Dlch* (first born) of the House of Toghuss, develop your skill in *Del'jok*, or study the finer points of *mok'bara*. Included are new rules for handling that unique Klingon concept—Honor.

Chapter Eleven: Narrator's Advice ties everything in this book together, and provides the Narrator with central information on the axioms and themes of Klingon-related stories.

Chapter Twelve: Klingon Supporting Cast provides the Narrator with Supporting Cast characters for use in her games, such as Martok, Lursa and B'Etor, and Gowron.

Chapter Thirteen: Binding Time is an adventure for Klingon characters. An ancient betrayal leads the Crew to a forgotten Klingon colony, where a deadly prophecy promises to scour the landscape clean of all life. Can they save the inhabitants in time? This adventure provides support for characters in a Starfleet-centered series as well.

Maps

The Klingon Empire includes a fold-out map page at the back of this book. One side details the sectors comprising the Klingon Empire. The reverse side details the planet Qo'noS.

Customizing this Material

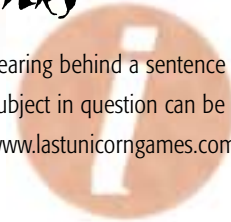
One of the most enjoyable aspects of being a Narrator comes when creating your own material. Although we provide a wealth of information for a roleplaying game, we also encourage you to develop your own ideas. Exercise your own creative vision and make the setting your own. This is one of the values of playing a roleplaying game—you can take on the role of producer, director, and scriptwriter, and do things your way. Some of the information presented herein may not conform with your personal vision of *Star Trek*. Or you might prefer to add your own ideas to the mix. That's okay. Feel free to change things around. In the end, it's your game.

What this Book is Not

The Klingon Empire is not the final word on Klingons. After over thirty years of television and movies, it is impossible to cover all things Klingon. If we've missed something, fear not. Last Unicorn Games will provide additional information in future products. Notably, the era covered by the original *Star Trek* is touched on only lightly herein; there was simply too much about 23rd century Klingons to be included. The differences between the Klingons as portrayed in *Star Trek* and *The Next Generation* and beyond warranted separate coverage. An upcoming supplement will detail the Klingons of the first *Star Trek* series, making it more appropriate for *Star Trek* RPG games.

Icon Links

This symbol appearing behind a sentence indicates that additional information on the subject in question can be found at the Last Unicorn Games Web site at www.lastunicorngames.com.



The Klingons



Klingons evolved battle-ready bodies on a harsh planet. The ferocity of their circumstances molded their minds, making aggression a virtue, candor a must, and utility the only criteria by which to measure value. Every Klingon is a warrior, training in both the use and spiritual significance of a wide range of weapons. Bound by honor, steeped in tradition, Klingons look to recreate a glorious and blood-spattered past. All social relationships, whether between man and woman, or the young and the old, are colored by their fearsome martial attitudes. The pride they take in their controlled savagery can be seen in their art, and even tasted in their formidable, writhing cuisine.

Klingon Physiognomy

"Real power is in the heart"

THE QUESTION OF HEAD RIDGES

Although not widely known among people in the 24th century, Klingons did not always sport their prominent head ridges. Though early images from Qo'noS clearly show them, a review of logs from the 23rd century just as clearly show Klingons without them. Federation geneticists suggest some sort of mutation, while xenologists talk of a different species altogether. But the only people who know the answer to this for certain aren't talking. Klingons do not like to discuss the matter, and those who ask a Klingon about it are likely to end up with some head bumps of their own.

To look at the planet Qo'noS, it seems a wonder life evolved there at all. Ranges of colossal volcanoes rake the landscape, flooding the lowlands with periodic cascades of deadly molten lava. They belch out vast poisonous clouds that blot out the sun. Lava reshapes the land so frequently nothing gets a chance to erode. There are no soft, rounded shapes in its natural world. Rocks are always jagged. Rivers rage through hard, sharp banks. Expect sudden cliffs, not gentle, rolling hills.

But life has a way of seizing whatever opportunities an environment presents it with, no matter how limited. Klingon plants developed armored shells to protect their green flesh from Qo'noS' acid winds, and vicious spikes with which to penetrate up through its hard-caked soil. Klingon herbivores grew razored teeth to punch through plant armor, and thick hides to protect them from the inevitable punctures made by botanic spears, spikes, and serrations. Predators evolved armored scales of their own to blunt the teeth of prey animals, and redundant organs allowing them to shrug off gorings, tail lashings, head butts, and slashing bites. Klingon hominids evolved from the most successful and vicious of these beasts, becoming the planet's most effective hunters. Adding to their ancestors' toughness, the biped's maneuverability and capacity for tool use, as well the wonders of stereoscopic vision, proto-Klingons tore their way to the top of the food chain. Like their prey, they lacked tear ducts; Qo'noS' atmosphere is so corrosive that its creatures had to evolve thick, scratch-resistant corneas to protect their eyes from damage.

Modern Klingons have their planet's brutal environment to thank for their robust physiques. They're bigger, stronger, and faster than Humans. Like other predatory fauna on Qo'noS, they enjoy organ redundancy, a feature Klingons call *brak'lul*. Wounds that would kill most other species merely slow a Klingon down. They have two livers, eight heart chambers, and an astounding twenty-three rib pairs. *Qachqeb*, a substance in Klingon blood cells, accelerates healing by rapidly carrying oxygen and needed nutrients to injured areas, and gives Klingon blood its lavender color. Doctors call the process by which nutrients are ferried to an inflamed area the *veK'tal* response—the measure of Klingon physiological condition. A fast *veK'tal* response indicates good health, while a dropping response suggests the body's healing mechanisms are overtaxed, and that the patient's life is in serious danger.

Klingon medicine is oriented more towards repairing injuries than fighting disease. Many basic maladies remain without cures. The most dreaded include the degenerative nerve disease *Yabl*; *HeHmln*, a neurological disorder that sends false depth perception information to the brain, and *Y'moraghu*, in which the blood begins to mine healthy tissue for nutrients with which to repair wounds. The latter term translates to "cycle of perpetual wounds," which sums up the effect. As one injury heals, a new break in the flesh spontaneously opens elsewhere on the body. More prosaic disorders include *rop'ngor*, an ailment similar to Human measles.

Psionics

The Klingons produce few full-fledged telepaths. The substance that ‘fires the Klingon heart’—*Qul’lw*—prevents most from focusing their minds effectively enough to use psychic powers, though rarely mutations occur. While Klingon warlords fiercely covet the ability to read an enemy’s mind, at the same time they despise mind-reading as a cowardly act. Where is the challenge in defeating an enemy already known? What of the “mystery of battle?” It’s like cheating—tempting to know the answers, but ultimately missing the point of the exercise. Those few who attain such power find being surrounded by the violence of Klingon minds to be overwhelming. Prolonged exposure often leads to neural degradation, violent hallucinations, and death; mind-readers tend to live short and miserable lives. Some Klingon lords force telepaths into near slavery, despite conventional opinion. Those who escape are typically hunted down and lynched by other community members. More acceptable Klingon psionic abilities include Battle Trance and Stare of Krug (see page 160).

Klingon Psychology

“Pleasure is nonessential”

Klingons are innately aggressive. Both male and females produce large quantities of *Qul’lw*, a hormone chemically similar to Human testosterone. Large areas of the Klingon brain are given over to receptors to identify and process this chemical when the body produces it. A wide range of experiences stimulate the production of *Qul’lw*: the threat of physical danger, sexual arousal, the visual image of a predatory animal, failure to succeed at a task, sensory experiences evocative of combat, or close proximity to another Klingon producing the hormone. *Qul’lw* dissipates much more slowly than it permeates the brain and body. Klingons get angry easily and forgive only with time and effort. Presence of the hormone in the brain not only sharpens reflexes, ramps up the *veK’tal* response, and shuts off pain receptors; it increases by 13.9% the brain’s ability to reason and to process sensory input. Thus a Klingon mathematician benefits as greatly from a surge of *Qul’lw* as a warrior would, provided he’s sufficiently angry and frustrated. When a Klingon enters puberty (*jak’tahla*), his or her glands produce incredible amounts of *Qul’lw*. He experiences mood

swings and heightened aggression, as well as break-outs of gorges (Klingon pimples). This can be a difficult and embarrassing time for Klingon teens.

Qo’noS’ bruising environment granted evolutionary advantage to individuals best able to channel their *Qul’lw* responses. Early Klingons survived by hunting. The fastest, strongest hunters brought down the biggest and most protein-rich game animals. They protected their catches from other Klingons who tried to take them. They became tribal leaders. They defended the best shelters. They won the mates most like themselves. Thus they passed on their traits and skills to later generations.

As small hunting bands evolved into larger communities, aggressive individuals seized the reins of leadership. Leaders held onto their authority by being better than anyone else at hunting and community defense. They in turn gave extra shares of food, favored living places, and better equipment to the most aggressive men under them. The weak were fed poorly, if at all, and died off, their inferior genes dying with them. Aggression meant survival. To suggest to a Klingon that he’d do better without it would be like telling Humans to abandon their ingenuity.

Because Klingon senses remain perpetually alert for threats, it is important to avoid accidentally activating another’s aggressive instincts—expressions and behaviors associated with weakness. Whispering, failing to make eye contact, and standing aloof from others all trigger the release of *Qul’lw*. A Klingon catching another hiding, eavesdropping, or spying on someone also undergoes the response. In order to avoid such triggers, Klingons developed a forthright manner of speaking. The Klingon must appear to be giving voice to his feelings; if he seems to be holding back, his interlocutors assume he’s planning something sneaky and threatening. On the other hand, he must also avoid insulting or menacing the person he speaks to, because that triggers the *Qul’lw* response, too. The Klingon speaker walks a tightrope between boldness and discretion, choosing words carefully but speaking without hesitation. It’s difficult to do this well, which in part explains the Klingon penchant for brawling. A Klingon who wants to take offense can always find an insult in another’s words.

In an aggressive society where arguments can easily lead to fights, phrasing an opinion correctly increases the chances of survival. While Klingons do not shirk from battle, it is important that not every disagreement or divergence of opinion lead to bloodshed. Klingons hone their skills at rhetoric, to stay out of pointless fights. Like other species, Klingons treat honesty as a cardinal virtue and seldom lie. Rather, they leave thoughts unspoken. They shade the truth to seem more palatable than